ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A central Service Creation Platform (SCP) is located at the service provider's premises. The SCP gives service providers a common platform from which to create and deploy new services, manage services, and record and aggregate billing records. The SCP

5   includes a (Lightweight Directory Access Protocol) LDAP database that stores policies associated with the various distributed network elements. The SCP is connected to Service Delivery Agents (SDAs) distributed throughout the network, which in turn are connected to Managed Elements (MEs). The MEs are hardware or software elements that provide the services to users. The SDAs control the MEs and, depending on the type of

10   ME, can monitor the activity of the ME.